





SPEECH

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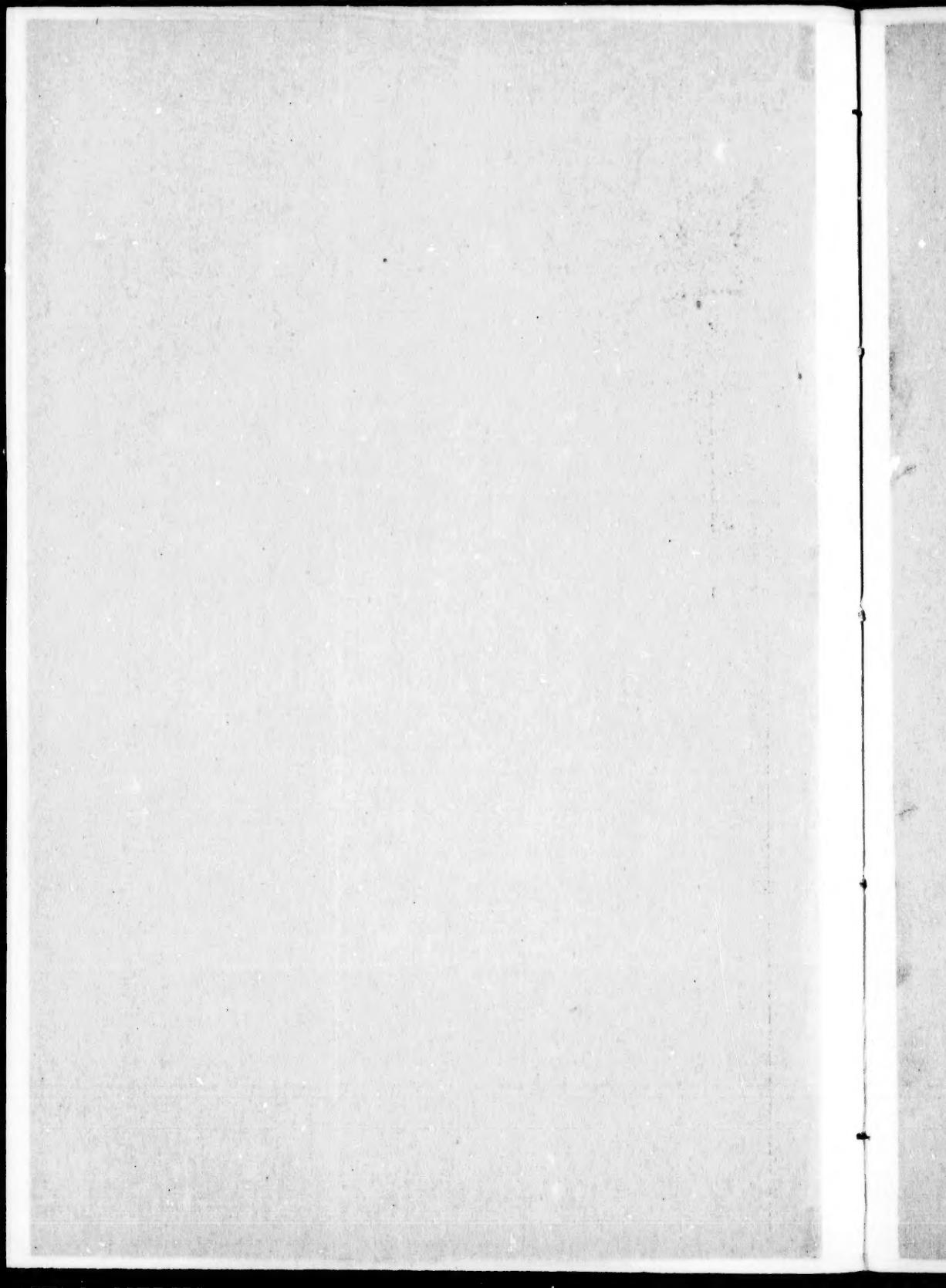
HON. HONORE MERCIER

~~~ BEFORE THE ~~

### 'CLUB NATIONAL'

~~~ ON THE ~~

6th NOVEMBER, 1889.



S P E E C H

DELIVERED BY THE HON. HONORÉ MERCIER,

—BEFORE THE—

“CLUB NATIONAL,”

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6TH NOVEMBER, 1889.

(TRANSLATION.)

GENTLEMEN,—

My colleagues and myself are delighted with the very kind and sympathetic reception tendered us by the Club National on the present occasion, and we will retain a very pleasant recollection not only of the words which you, Mr. President, have addressed us, but also of the courtesy which you have shown us this evening.

My colleagues and myself have decided to sit, from time to time, and as circumstances will permit, in the city of Montreal, in order to settle, on the spot, local questions which interest the citizens of this vast political region and also to meet our friends and the public in general.

Your demonstration is made in the name of the two clubs which are very dear to us, the Club National and the Club Letellier; the Club National, which is honored by the same title as the present Government, a title which gave it its strength at the first moments of its existence, which has gained for it the sympathies of a large number of citizens, and which it fully intends to bear in the future as representing its tendencies and its aspirations.

The Club Letellier, which bears the name of a patriot, as to whose political conduct we, who are members of the National party, have not always been of the same opinion, but which recalls the venerated memory of a man who was loyal to his

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country and to his friends and a statesman who has left a great name behind him.

Those who knew Letellier intimately, know how he favored the union of men of spirit, who, in his opinion, should join hands to secure the triumph of the great interests of our Province. How often, in our intimate conversations ten years ago, when I had the honour of being one of his advisers and the pleasure of being one of his confidants, did he not deplore our fratricidal contests and the dissensions which weakened us. How many times did he not advise me to draw closer to my opponents, to hold out a friendly hand to them, to ask them to forget the animosities of the past and sacrifice all at the foot of the altar of our country, in order to unite the whole strength of the nation, and by this patriotic union secure the triumph of those sacred interests he had so much at heart.

Alas ! he died before he could witness the realization of his favorite dream, the dream of his whole life. But to-day how he would rejoice in spirit. Two clubs are met together, one bearing his name and the other representing his great ideal.

They are met to receive the members of the Government formed under the shelter of the national flag as the result of a noble and generous sentiment and, triumphing over the many obstacles thrown in its way, that Government asserts its strength more than ever and shows the whole country that the desired union has been accomplished, that it is intact and true and prepares still further triumphs for the morrow, which will consolidate its work and definitively assure public prosperity.

In the address which has just been presented to us, you are kind enough to allude to the various political questions which at present occupy the attention of the country, and you have been good enough to favorably appreciate our solution of the majority of them.

You have been too indulgent, but on the other hand you have, I think, not gone beyond facts.

We have in truth settled many questions since we have been in power ; we have done away with the deficits which ruined and dishonored us ; we have adopted severe measures to secure the payment of all the moneys due to the Province ; we have stopped the many thefts in the distribution of colonization moneys and, finally, we have put an end to the glaring injustice to which settlers were subjected by the lumber merchants.

On the other hand we have settled that celebrated difficulty which has lasted for almost a century in connection with the Jesuits' Estates ; we have inaugurated that generous and beneficial policy of constructing iron bridges ; we have established the order of Agricultural Merit by means of which successful farmers will receive honors and rewards which will excite a praiseworthy emulation and give a new impetus to Agriculture, the important cause of our success and the unfailing source of our wealth. By means of a loan effected under advantageous conditions we have done away with the floating debt ; finally we have succeeded in many other respects in rendering the position of the country satisfactory for the present and re-assuring for the future.

But our work is far from complete, it is only at its beginning.

We have a huge task before us which calls for all our care, all our energy, all our devotedness ; we have before us the vast necessities of the country, and we should stop only when they are provided for.

Public Instruction requires further assistance to enable it to realize the hopes of men of intelligence and it must be given to it. It is our duty to diffuse the light of education amongst all classes and especially the poorest and most humble ; the people ask us to give them education unsparingly and we will do so. It is a task and a duty ; we will not hesitate before the task nor weaken before the duty.

We have to multiply means of communication and render them still easier so as to bring our rural population nearer to the great centres and to enable them to bring the products of their farms and industry to a market. For that purpose we will have to grant new subsidies to railway companies which give sufficient guarantees and which propose to build roads to promote Colonization, Agriculture and Commerce. We also have to improve our municipal roads by offering special inducements to municipalities which desire to macadamize their roads so as enable farmers to reach the large centres easily and economically.

This will be a legitimate compensation for the sacrifices which they have so generously made in order to assure the construction of our railways. This compensation is all the more necessary that the farmers will probably be again called upon in the near future to assist us in removing toll gates and toll bridges, which, in the vicinity of our large cities and of

certain country places, are a real public nuisance and hinder progress.

In order to realize all these great things and to meet the views and aspirations of our Province we must increase our public revenues; obtain from the Federal Government all we are entitled to within the reasonable limits laid down by the Inter-provincial Conference of 1887; effect the conversion of our debt so as to relieve our budget of a heavy annual expense; push back the frontier of the Province to Hudson's Bay and East Maine River which will have the result of adding one hundred thousand square miles of territory to that which we already possess; develop our mining, industrial and agricultural resources so as to give additional and greatly enhanced value to our public lands; finally, launch the Province in the path of true, intelligent, constant and permanent progress, which will justify the most sanguine hopes.

We are working in a sure manner, gentlemen, to secure the realization of these great projects, and if all men of spirit, all willing men will lend us their assistance, we will carry out this policy, not in the interest of a party, not in the interest of any one man, but in the interest of all, for the honour and prosperity of our Province.

These labours, undertaken for the general welfare, are appreciated and even admired by those who can divest themselves of party spirit and judge of them in an intelligent manner.

The electors approve of our conduct, applaud it and assure us of constant triumphs which succeed each other with a gratifying rapidity. These successes you may rest assured, gentlemen, are but the fore-runners of those we will obtain at the general elections when the people will be called upon for their honest and intelligent verdict, and will give the National Government whom you greet to-night, the greatest majority ever known in the annals of our Legislature.

The difficulties we meet, the objections raised, the charges brought against us do not affect our general policy, which is recognized as satisfactory and beneficial to the country.

What we are reproached with are details, details apparently serious but insignificant and futile in reality.

We are accused of having increased the expenditure, but are not credited with the increase of revenue.

We are told, " You spend too much," without admitting that we remain within the limits of our revenue. Those who

reproach us with this are the same men who might claim to have spent less, it is true, but who showed us deficits every year; while we, if we may be reproached with spending more, may also be complimented upon having considerable surpluses.

Moreover, those who so reproach us with spending more, worked less than we did and settled nothing while we settle everything. Locomotives which do not run, spend nothing and gather only rust; Governments which do nothing, spend little and earn but a slight reputation. We prefer going ahead, spending more and doing the work of the country.

A few facts and figures will suffice to convey my idea and satisfy reasonable men who are disposed to judge in an impartial manner.

THE RECEIPTS.

The preparation of the work of the session and the session itself kept the members of the present Government busy from the date of their swearing in on the 29th January, 1887, to the 18th May, 1887, the date of the prorogation. That is to say, that we are responsible, at least practically, only for the management of the financial affairs of the year ending on the 30th June, 1888, and that our responsibility really commences only with that year, the only one for which, since we came into power, the public accounts are printed.

The receipts for the year ending 30th June, 1887, were only \$2,973,191; those of year ending the 30th June, 1888, amounted to \$3,738,228, making an increase of \$765,037.

Four items of receipts show the following changes:—

| | 1887. | 1888. | Inc. |
|---------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Crown Lands..... | \$692,620 | \$725,627 | \$ 33,007 |
| Justice..... | 202,042 | 252,204 | 50,162 |
| Licenses..... | 342,215 | 360,199 | 17,984 |
| Taxes on commercial corporations..... | | 558,393 | 558,393 |
| Various other increases..... | | | \$659,546 |
| | | | 105,491 |
| Total increase | | | \$765,037 |

It is true that in this very considerable amount there is the item of \$558,393 for taxes on commercial corporations estimated at \$150,000 per annum, but by striking out the surplus

as arrears, say \$408,883, there still remains an increase of \$356,644.

This is due to the energy and activity we displayed in collecting the moneys due the Province.

THE EXPENDITURE.

Let us compare the expenses in the same way.
They are as follows:—

| | |
|----------------------|-------------|
| 30th June, 1888..... | \$8,865,032 |
| " " 1887..... | 3,288,797 |

| | |
|---------------|--------|
| Increase..... | 76,235 |
|---------------|--------|

This is the actual increase of the ordinary expenses during the year 1887-88.

Allow me to give you some explanations as to this increase, which explanations I am sure you will find satisfactory.

| | 1887. | 1888. | Inc. |
|----------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Justice..... | \$392,218 | \$438,755 | \$ 46,537 |
| Police..... | 14,425 | 19,090 | 4,665 |
| Reformatories..... | 84,452 | 88,708 | 4,256 |
| Inspection of public offices | 6,272 | 7,592 | 1,320 |
| Civil Government..... | 193,904 | 208,677 | 14,773 |
| Agriculture..... | 89,476 | 97,700 | 8,224 |
| Public Works | 94,575 | 145,096 | 50,521 |
| Distribution of Municipal
Code..... | | 5,000 | 5,000 |
| Aid to Hull sufferers..... | | 5,000 | 5,000 |
| Cost of collection..... | 28,748 | 41,666 | 12,918 |

| | |
|---------------|-----------|
| Increase..... | \$153,214 |
|---------------|-----------|

Here is consequently an increase of \$153,214 in this expenditure to justify that of \$76,235. Let us explain some of these figures.

1. Justice—increase \$46,537.

The contingent expenses of the sheriffs alone show a difference of \$43,665. There were districts in which the criminal court had not been held for some time and in which the sheriffs' accounts, jurors' fees, &c., &c., had remained in suspense. We caused the terms to be held and paid the old accounts, &c., &c.

2. Police—increase \$4,665.

Our predecessors had promised to better remunerate the

police magistrates but had not kept their promise, which we redeemed.

3. Inspection of Public Offices—increase \$1,820.

This had been neglected and serious frauds committed in some offices.

We appointed Mr. Geoffrion, a very competent man, to inspect the registry offices.

This cost more but we put a stop to fraudulent practices, increased our revenues and protected family interests.

4. Civil Government—increase \$14,778.

The greater portion of this increase is explained by the creation of a special department of Agriculture and Colonization. No one can reproach us for this additional expenditure which, later on, secured us the services of Colonel Rhodes, a minister who is a practical agriculturist, a distinguished gentleman who is an honour to his nationality and to his class, an indefatigable man who attends all our agricultural exhibitions and encourages our worthy farmers by speeches of which he alone has the secret.

And who would dare to say anything against the appointment of Monsignor Labelle, the Apostle of Colonization, the worthy priest who has spent his life in good works, the patriotic citizen who has founded twenty parishes in the Northern part of the Province. If there be any one sufficiently devoid of sense to reproach us for the modest remuneration paid to so active, intelligent and efficient a deputy minister, let him be pointed out !

5. Public Works—increase \$50,521.

Our court houses and gaols were in an incredible state of dilapidation. We have repaired them, re-built the foundations, and furnished them, &c. This has cost a great deal of money, it is true, but our court houses and gaols are in good order, clean, well-furnished, &c.

6. Agriculture—increase \$8,224.

A single item will explain this increase. Our predecessors had given \$5,000 for the exhibition at Sherbrooke; we gave \$12,000 for that in Quebec, which was a success in every way worthy of the ancient capital, and one in which the fertile valley of lake St. John appeared to advantage.

This exhibition, solemnly inaugurated by Cardinal Tacheau with unusual *eclat*, has produced the best results.

Who can reproach us for this necessary and useful expenditure ?

7. Distribution of the Municipal Code—increase \$5,000.

This expenditure was incurred for the first time in order to distribute a work which is indispensable for those worthy people who, in our country places, render gratuitously and with admirable disinterestedness, services which are of the utmost value to the public and who maintain the municipal institutions which are the ground-work of our public liberties.

8. Aid to the Hull sufferers—\$5,000.

A disastrous fire had swept over that city and we thought it was our duty to help the victims. We did the same thing for St. Sauveur, where we spent \$10,000, and for the disaster in Champlain street, for which we spent \$500. Is there a single right-hearted man who will say we were not justified in doing so?

9. Cost of Collection—increase \$12,918.

What would you have? When you make your employees work; when you collect three-quarters of a million more; when you change a deficit into a surplus, it costs you more. But this is only just and all sensible men will approve of it.

Now that I have given these explanations, I appeal to all who are business men, who are reasonable men, and I ask "Who can blame us for this increased expenditure?"

I rely upon the judgement of honest men of both political parties, and I do so in all confidence.

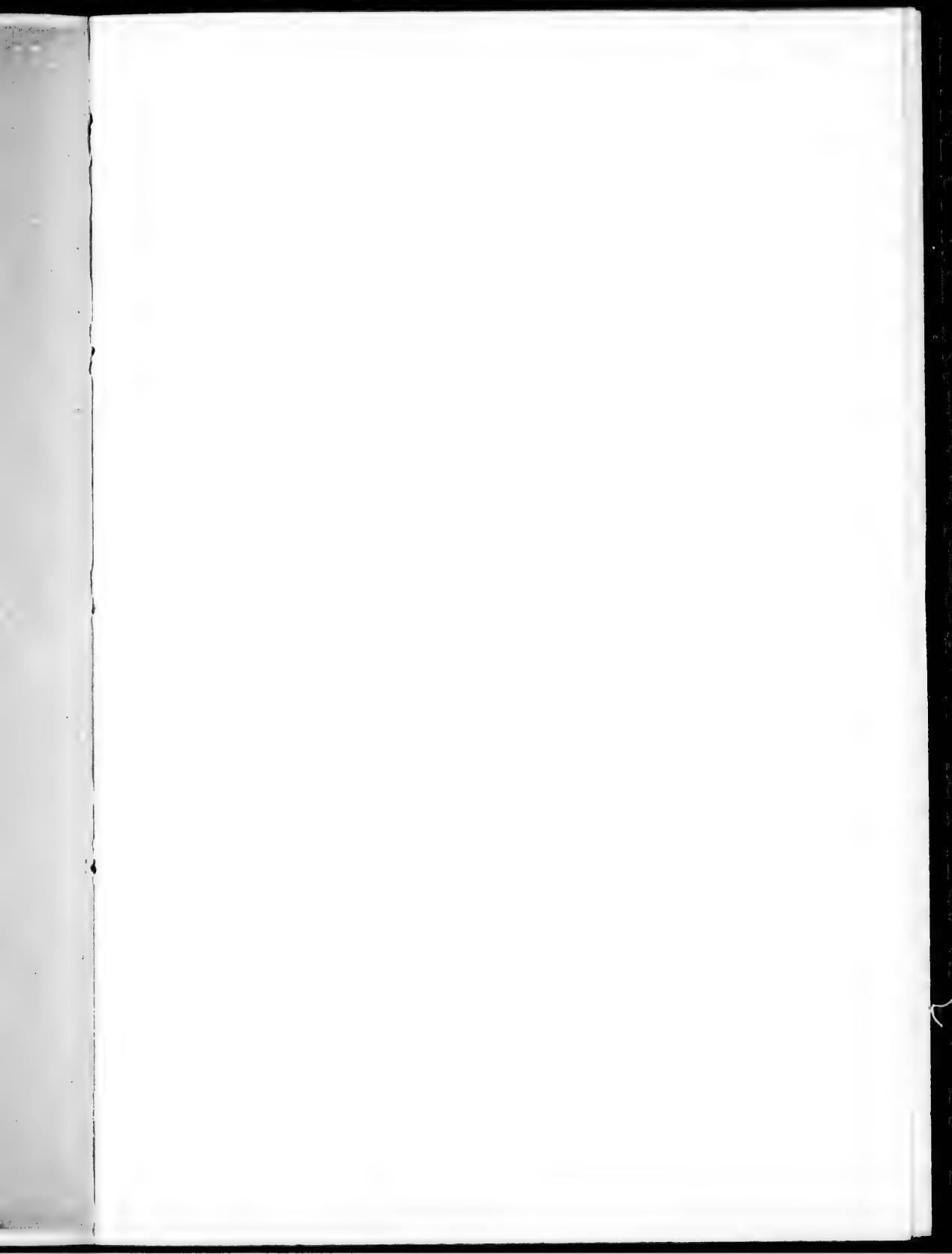
MALICE OR FOLLY.

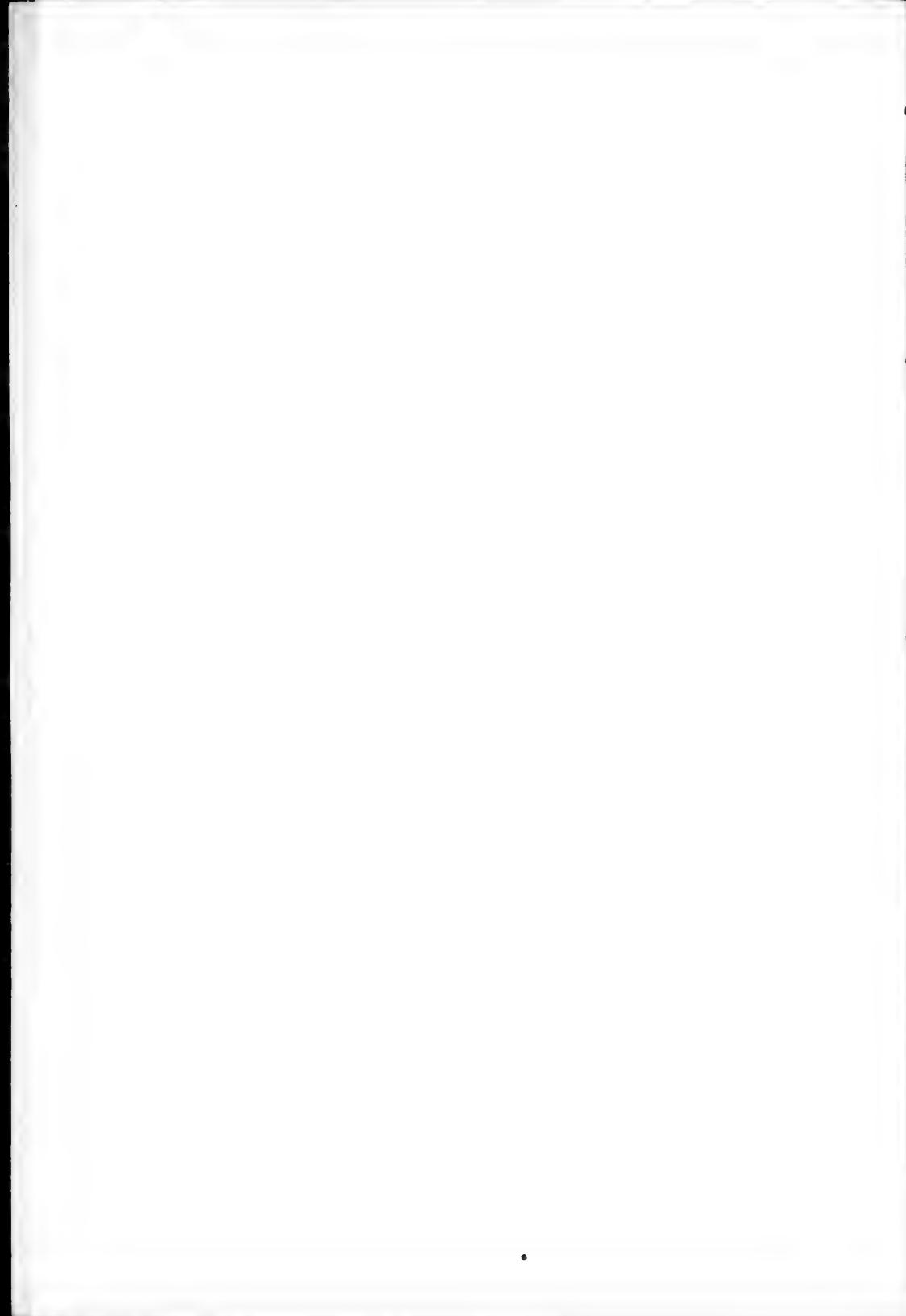
There are some persons who write in the newspapers or who say upon the hustings that our expenses for the year ending the 30th June, 1888, have not been \$3,865,032, as I have just stated, but \$5,996,977, as would appear from the public accounts, page 15, to those who know no better.

And there are worthy Conservatives, it is even said that there are very good Liberals, who have been imposed upon by this ridiculous statement, confusing the payments with the expenditure.

In fact this amount of \$5,996,977 comprises the following amounts:

| | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| New Parliament Buildings, construction..... | \$ 250,000 |
| New Court House, Quebec | 210,000 |
| Iron bridges..... | 25,000 |
| Protestant Insane Asylum..... | 10,000 |
| Special insurance deposit handed to the Federal Government | 32,765 |





Codification of the Statutes..... 45,000
 Railway subsidies, &c., &c..... 662.275

Repayment of temporary loans, etc., etc., etc. 1,500,000

And there is an amount of \$2,631,948 of these!

Really it is regrettable to have to take up such absurdities and waste one's time in answering them.

EXPENDITURE OF 1888-1889 AND 1889-1890.

But our opponents say that our expenditure for the current year (1889-1890) and the year ending 30th June last (1888-1889) is much greater than that for the year 1887-1888, of which I have just spoken. We admit that it is greater, but we consider it justified by circumstances.

When the time will come for explaining it, we will do so as successfully, we hope, and to the satisfaction of reasonable people, in the same manner as I have just done for the year 1887-1888, the last year for which the public accounts are printed; those of 1888-1889 are being prepared, and those of 1889-1890 cannot of course be given until after the 30th June next.

But it is said : " You have asked for those two years more than for the preceding ones, and consequently you will continue to increase the expenditure ? "

This assertion is true, but it is not sufficient to justify a condemnation.

In the first place, we do not spend more than our revenues, since we had a surplus for the year ending the 30th June last, and we will also have one for the current year.

Then, the increased expenditure is justified both by the requirements of the public service and the works which have to be accomplished. Thus, for instance, we have raised some salaries in the departments and in the court houses.

Well, this was indispensable, and I do not hesitate to say so. There were good employees whose salaries had remained the same since Confederation; advocates in the offices of the courts, appointed 30 years ago, active and laborious, who had only \$800 and \$900; workmen and laborers who received only 98 cents a day, yes, 98 cents a day. It is incredible, but it is true. Was it not barbarous, purely and simply, to maintain such a state of things?

And we now give \$100,000 for new bridges, \$100,000 for colonization roads; we are getting a large map of the Province made which will cost \$8,000; we are making maritime roads

in Gaspesia and the Saguenay region which will cost over \$30,000; we are having explorations made in the southern counties, from Richmond to Rimouski, which will cost over \$40,000; we are having marshes and swamps drained, creeks and rivers deepened so as to open up vast and fertile areas to cultivation; this will cost over \$100,000; we have granted special and additional subsidies to schools, convents, colleges, hospitals, &c., for over \$50,000; we give prizes for dairy schools, a new expense of at least \$10,000 for the two years; we have raised the indemnity of members of the Legislature to \$800, and the salaries of the Speakers to \$3,000, and increase asked for by both parties and amounting to over \$20,000 per annum.

Such are the details which are necessary under the circumstances and which are calculated to remove many prejudices and calumnies, which I leave to the intelligent appreciation of the citizens of this country.

INCREASE OF BUSINESS.

A word, now, relative to the increase of business in order to prove what I stated a moment ago and to show the large amount of additional work we are doing.

The following information on the subject speaks for itself. It has been prepared with great care by the departmental heads and indicates the difference between the old and the present regime.

In the Provincial Secretary's office, there is, in 1889, as compared with 1886, an increase of two in the number of employees and of \$2,120 in the total of the salaries; but the statement of the work done shows that the number of documents or records that have passed through the hands of the staff has increased from 13,426 in 1886 to 41,521 in 1889, which makes an increase of 28,095 or more than 209 per cent., that is to say that the work has more than doubled, while the number and the salaries of the staff have remained about the same.

In the Attorney-General's department, the number of employees remains at seven, as in 1886, and the total of the salaries has been increased to the extent of \$712; but the work has nearly doubled; the figures representing it are 2,854 for 1886 and 4,808 for 1889, or an increase of 68 per cent.

The number of permanent employees and supernumeraries, in the department of public works and railways, has been in-

creased by three, and the total of the salaries by \$4,575. On the other hand, the work shows an increase of 50 per cent, or three or four times more than that of the employees and the salaries. It is, perhaps, well to add that the number of permanent employees has been reduced by two and that that of the supernumeraries will be also diminished, as soon as we have got rid of the extra work imposed on us by the settlement of old business, which we found almost in a state of chaos.

In the department of Agriculture, Colonization and Immigration, we have added two to the staff of permanent officers and supernumeraries; but we have done 68 per cent more business, that is to say, that the work has almost doubled.

The figures supplied by the Auditor's office are about the same for 1886 and 1889; but Mr. Drolet shows by his report that the business has greatly increased.

The report furnished by the Crown Lands department indicates an increase of fifteen in the staff and of \$13,397.95 in the salaries, and of \$13,196 or 41 per cent in the amount of the work; but the principal officers state that these figures are far from giving an exact idea of the real increase.

Here is what is said on the subject by Mr. Rivard, head of the Land Sales' branch, Eastern section:—

"It is perhaps right to note that the reports and memoranda made for a couple of years past in this section of the sales' branch, are not only more numerous, but the greater part of them much more voluminous than heretofore, necessitating much more labor, study and research, etc., as, for instance, many reports on the Jesuits' Estates, others on beach lots, on certain properties of the Seigniory of Lauzon, etc.

"It is also well to add that, undoubtedly, owing to the great facility for traveling nowadays, we have, apart from the written correspondence, a good deal of business to transact verbally with people who, instead of writing, prefer to come and do their business in person at the office; and, to hear and answer them, considerable time is taken up; so much so, in fact, that often this duty alone occupies one or two of the principal employees of the branch for whole days.

"This does not appear in the above figure; but should, nevertheless be taken into account at the same time, in order to ascertain the amount of work done in this branch of the Crown Lands department."

Mr. Lavoie, head of the Western section, makes the same remarks; and Mr. Gauvin, referring to the survey branch, observes:

"It must be noted that the figures of the above table only give an imperfect idea of the real amount of work done in the survey branch ; the daily researches that have to be made in the archives, and the verbal information of all kinds given to the public, represent a considerable quantity, in regard to which we have no precise data."

We have not yet been able to obtain from the Treasury, the Department of Public Instruction and the Office of the Queen's Printer, the necessary information to institute a comparison between 1886 and 1889 ; but for the seven other departments—those of the Secretary, Registrar, Attorney General, Auditor, Crown Lands, Public Works, Agriculture and Colonization,—the data transmitted establish that if the number of employees, permanent and extra, has been increased only by 25 and their salaries by \$26,453, the work has increased in the proportion of \$89,871 to \$147,718, which makes an increase of \$58,347 or more than 65 per cent. Taking into account the additional work which does not figure in these statements, it may be safely asserted that the work has almost doubled or has increased 100 per cent., while the number and the salaries of the staff have only been increased by about 20 per cent. If those who reproach us with having increased the expenses had remained in power, they would—to perform the surplus work we have accomplished—have increased the number of employees and the amount of their salaries three or four times more than we have done.

One example is sufficient to show the whole difference between the two administrations.

According to the statement supplied by Mr. Mackedie, the accountant of the Crown Lands Department, it appears that in 1886 the gross receipts of that department were \$630,-475, and the gross expenditure \$130,000, or 21 per cent. of the receipts. In 1889, the gross receipts had increased to \$1,065,-199, and the expenditure to \$211,700 or 20 per cent. of the receipts. That is to say, that while increasing the receipts by \$434,724 or about 69 per cent., we have reduced the percentage of the expenditure by 1 per cent.

The same may be said with regard to nearly all the other branches of the public service. With a bad faith, unworthy of a self-respecting party, the Opposition are making a great outcry about the pretended increase of the expenses, but take good care not to say a word about the increase of business and revenue necessitating the additional expenditure. If we had

wished to imitate their example, and to give up the public domain to pillage, we might have saved ourselves from certain expenses; but we deemed it to be our duty to put an end to this system, and, by expending \$18,897 more than in 1886 for the administration of the public domain, we have found means to make it yield an additional revenue of \$434,724, and to bring up the receipts to \$1,065,199 in 1889, as compared with \$630,475 in 1886.

EMPLOYMENT OF THE LAST LOAN.

With a display of bad faith which must be sincerely regretted, our opponents spread all sorts of rumors, calculated to injure the Province, make all sorts of charges to create a dangerous feeling of uneasiness in the public mind, and maliciously allege with a full knowledge that the statement is false, that we have no longer a cent, that the treasury is empty, and that we are obliged to borrow from day to day, like people who live by their wits, to meet the obligations of the public service.

It is hypocritically added, as something abominable, that the amount of the loan of 1888 is all expended.

Let us at once deal with this abominable thing.

The Act sanctioned on the 18th May, 1887, 50 Vict. chap. 3, authorized us to borrow three millions and a half at 4 per cent. *to pay off the floating debt.*

Now, what was that floating debt? It is down in black and white as follows in the law:—

| | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| a. For temporary loans and trust funds..... | \$ 729,227 76 |
| b. For unpaid warrants..... | 16,196 78 |
| c. For balance upon subsidies granted to certain railway companies before the year 1886..... | 579,732 25 |
| d. For payment of the first 35 cents of subsidies in money.. | \$1,084,328 50 |
| And also, for the payment of the first 35 cents of the same subsidies, to be converted into money subsidies..... | 464,100 00 |
| | ————— |
| | 1,548,428 50 |

The whole under the Act 49-50 Victoria, chapter 77, 1886.

| | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| e. For payment of the work to be performed on the Legislative buildings and the Court House at Quebec upon which the sum of \$160,000 was then due..... | 427,937 06 |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|

| | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| f. For balances due upon purchase of lands and other debts admitted in connection with the Q. M. O. & O. Railway..... | 64,070 00 |
| g. For a similar amount to be reimbursed to the sinking fund by law established and lost by the deposit in the Exchange Bank..... | 27,000 00 |
| h. For the estimated deficiency in the ordinary revenue of the current year 1886-1887..... | 370,842 06 |

Whereas, on the 31st January, 1887, these various sums amounted to the sum of three millions, seven hundred and sixty-three thousand, four hundred and thirty-four dollars and thirty-two cents..... 3,763,434 32

Whereas, in addition to the said sum, the following sums are required for the public service, in addition to the ordinary expenditure:-

| | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| i. For enlarging the Court House, Montreal..... | 200,000 00 |
| k. For encouraging the building of iron bridges in municipalities | 25,000 00 |
| l. For the payment of part of the expenses of the exploration recommended by the Legislative Assembly on the 14th June, 1886, for the counties of Dorchester, Levis, Bellechasse, Montmagny, Kamouraska, Temiscouata, Lotbiniere, Megantic, Arthabaska and Wolfe..... | 10,000 00 |
| m. For the amount of the additional supplementary Estimates for the current year 1886-87 | 39,190 57 |

Whereas these last sums amount to the sum of two hundred and seventy-four thousand, one hundred and ninety dollars and fifty-seven cents.....

274,190 57

And, with the said sum of three millions seven hundred and sixty-three thousand four hundred and thirty-four dollars and thirty-two cents.....

3,763,434 32

Form a grand total of four millions and thirty-seven thousand six hundred and twenty-four dollars and eighty-nine cents.....

\$4,037,624 89

Whereas there were in addition, on the 31st January, 1887, contested claims against the Government of the Province for a very large amount;

Whereas the Province has certain claims to set off against the above, but it is impossible, owing to their nature and circumstances, to establish even approximately the sum that may be collected;

Whereas it is in the public interest that such floating debt should be settled, and the Government be placed in a position to meet all the lawful claims against the Province;

The loan of three millions and a half was thus authorized to pay off four millions of floating debt; remark well, not for anything else.

The loan was effected on very advantageous terms, and produced \$3,878,832.50.

What have we done with this amount? It is really horrible, and I am afraid to tell you.

We have paid off that amount of the floating debt mentioned in the Statute. Is not that something abominable?

You will find all these details in Mr. Shehyn's admirable speech of last session. And to think that the Opposition has allowed this guilty minister to leave for Europe without having him arrested on a *capias!* he who has expended all the proceeds of the loan of 1888 for the objects specified in the law, as he was bound to do.

Frankly speaking, this is shocking, and honest people should be dismayed at the spectacle of a treasurer departing from the traditions of his predecessors and honestly applying the proceeds of a loan to the purposes for which it was destined! And destined by the law itself.

A word now relative to the first charge, that "we have not a cent in the treasury and are living by loans."

In the first place, I hasten to inform you that we have not borrowed one cent since 1888, that is to say, since the three millions and a half loan from the Credit Lyonnais. Not even one cent of temporary loans; note the fact well!

And yet we paid yesterday in this city \$400,000 of the indemnity for the Jesuits' Estates! And we have asked nobody to lend us a cent for the purpose.

Really, is not this annoying to our adversaries! To think that we have not been obliged to borrow in order to please them and to bear out their false and unjust charges!

But from all sides comes the cry: "you are giving letters of credit because you have no more money."

Another falsehood, gentlemen!

I admit that there have been several letters issued by the departments, promising to have certain amounts voted next session; but they have been given, not because there was no more money in the chest, but simply because there were no credits to warrant such expenditure. And credit here means *appropriation* by the Legislature—no payment being permissible without a vote of credit by the Legislature or without a special warrant issued in such cases.

All these charges are false, lying, concocted to injure the Government, and wafted about on the wing of wicked and anti-patriotic calumny for the purpose of alarming the public and obtaining an ephemeral party success.

I affirm here before the distinguished men by whom I am surrounded and who are my judges; I affirm before the people whom I respect and whom I do not want to deceive, that there is not one word of truth in all these stories, that the salaries of the public officers are paid regularly and that the interest service of the debt is being attended to according to the requirements of the law, to the satisfaction of our creditors and to the honor of the Province.

Let our opponents continue their outcry if they please; that's their business. But they will not be believed; my word will be accepted by the reasonable people in both parties.

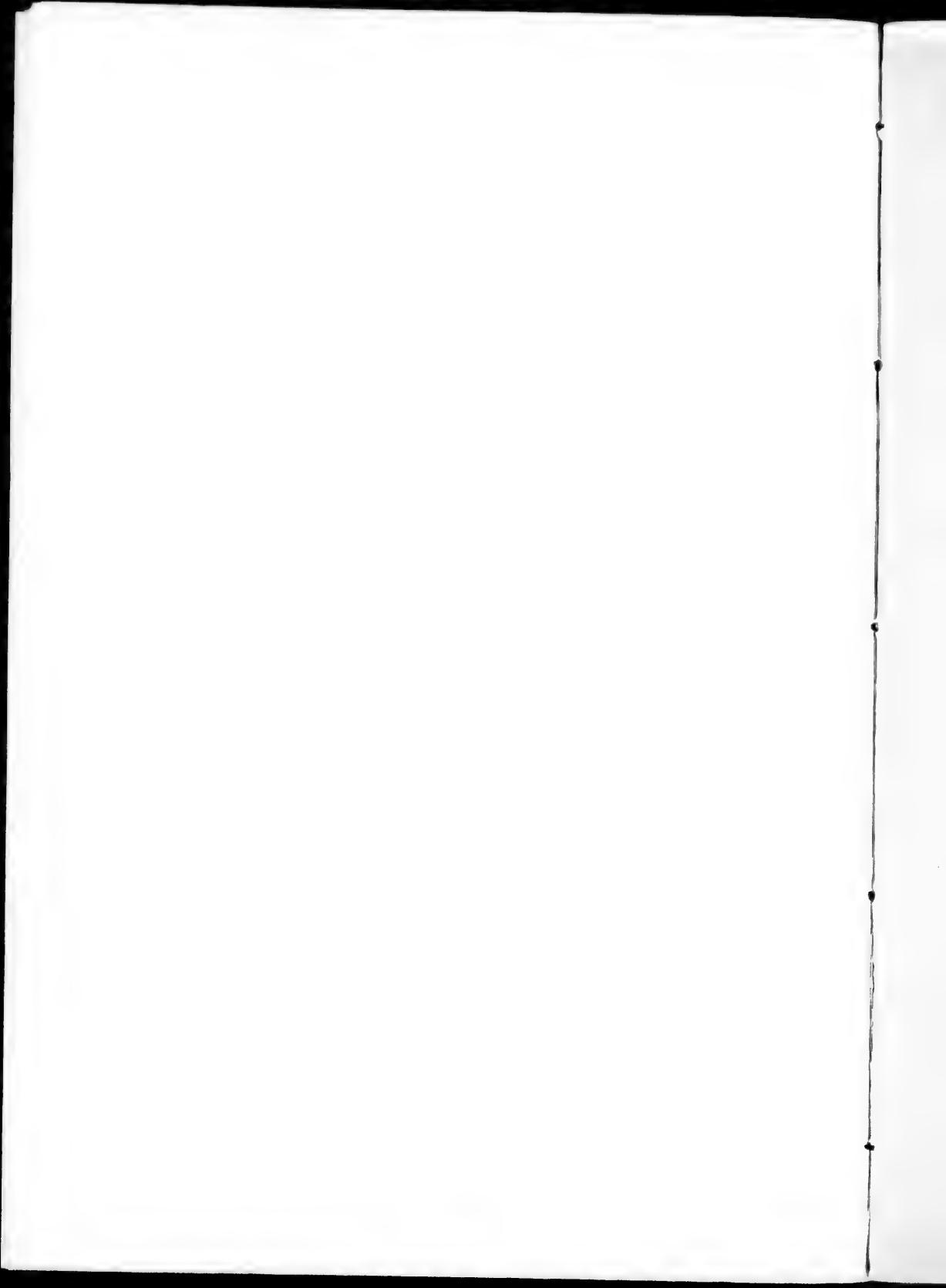
OUR SURPLUSES.

We have not only used the proceeds of the loan to pay off debts or obligations contracted by our predecessors, but we have also applied to the same purpose a part of the surpluses which we have realized since 1887. I need not tell you that these surpluses are far from being soothing to our friends of the Opposition, who are giving themselves an infinity of trouble to muddle matters and to deny so obvious a fact.

Yet the question is very simple. Between the 1st February, 1887, and the 31st December, 1888, we paid out on capital account \$4,881,401.49, and we received on the same account during those 23 months, only \$3,925,389.10. We thus paid \$456,062.39 more than we received. Whence did we take this money? Simply out of the excess of the ordinary receipts over the ordinary expenses; no sensible person with the slightest notion of business and of accounts can dispute a fact

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so clear. Bad as we are represented, we are not wizards; we do not deal in magic, and as there were no other resources from which we could take to meet those \$456,062.39 of excess of payments on capital account, it must necessarily be admitted that we took this sum from the excess of receipts realized on the ordinary operations.

This is not all. On the 31st December, 1888, we had on hand, in addition to the moneys intended for the railway companies, a sum of \$263,018.38. Add this sum to the \$456,062.39 just mentioned, and the conclusion is inevitable that during those twenty-three months we realized in the ordinary operations excesses of receipts amounting in the aggregate to \$718,080.77.

As will be seen, the situation is not exactly desperate, and if those gentlemen of the Opposition are making such a noise about the condition of our finances, it is simply for the purpose of throwing dust in the eyes of the public and to prevent it from seeing clearly a state of things as glorious for us as it is crushing for them. Instead of the deficits which were the outcome of all their budgets, ours show surpluses which enable us to pay off these debts and, in addition, to put money aside.

THE JESUITS' ESTATES.

It seems to me that I would be wanting in my duty and cause you a legitimate disappointment if I did not refer to the question of the Jesuits' Estates, not to defend myself for having settled it—for a good action needs no defence—but to give you some explanations as to certain details and to reply to the deplorable assertions made by Hon. Mr. Chapleau, at St. Hilaire, in September last.

I went to Rome in 1888 expressly to settle this thorny, delicate and difficult question. And I succeeded, thanks to the broad-mindedness of His Holiness Leo XIII, to the prudence of His Eminence Cardinal Taschereau, and to the skill of the Very Reverend Father Turgeon, rector of St. Mary's College, Montreal. We have settled this question, not in order to favor our party, but to carry out a great principle: the restoration of stolen property. My colleagues and myself have always believed, and we still believe that kings have no more right than private citizens to steal, and that there is no more justification for taking the property of a Jesuit than for taking that of a Protestant. We therefore decided to make restitu-

tion in the shape of compensation, and we easily came to an agreement on the subject.

Now that the transaction is closed, that this grave difficulty has been smoothed over, we are told that we should not have settled, that we have paid too much, and that we did wrong in mixing up the name of the Pope with the transaction.

Let us settle these three points.

1. *We did wrong in settling.*

This contention is very unfair. We might have disputed the rights of the Catholic Church to these estates. Rightly or wrongly, it claimed to be the proprietor of them; and our opponents, Protestant and Catholic, may say that we should have contested those rights and refused to settle. Although dishonest from my point of view, this position would have been at least logical.

But it is only the Protestants who say this. All Catholics admit that it was our duty to submit and settle.

Therefore, for the Catholics, the question becomes only one of figures; the principle of restitution, in the form of compensation being admitted, there remains but one detail—that of the *quantum*.

This is acknowledged on all hands, and Mr. Chapleau proclaimed it very openly at St. Hilaire. It is even a point sought to be made against us.

We have been told: "You have no merit in this matter; you have only carried out what we agreed to carry out."

We shall examine this point presently; but let us note well, in the first place, that a settlement had to me made.

Hon. Mr. Chapleau himself affirms it. Here are his own words, taken from the Montreal *Gazette* of the 7th September last:—

"Mr. Mercier said: I have only completed what was begun by Mr. Chapleau and continued by Mr. Ross. Yes, I had not only begun, but had almost completed the settlement of this vexed question when I left office....."

Thus Mr. Chapleau boasts of having *almost* settled the difficulty. The word *almost* is ingenuous, but it is conclusive for me. How can Mr. Chapleau's friends, the Orangemen, make it a crime for me in principle to have made this settlement and not do the same to Mr. Chapleau?

But there is more than this: this declaration of Mr. Chapleau's, which, in ordinary cases, might have passed for a piece of bluster, for one of those humbugs of the hustings,

with which he is familiar, is true, not because he says it, but because others have said it before him.

When Hon. Mr. Ouimet was Premier he wrote to Cardinal Antonelli as follows :—

" Whatever may happen concerning this question, I must declare to Your Eminence that it is the firm intention of the Government to not treat this question with the Revd. Jesuit Fathers, but solely with the Archbishop of Quebec, whose prudence and wisdom inspire the Government with the fullest confidence."

Thus Mr. Ouimet consented to treat this question, but not with the Jesuits, and solely with the Archbishop of Quebec.

The principle was therefore admitted.

On the 9th October, 1876, the bishops of the Province wrote as follows :

" Already, on several occasions, the bishops', clergy and Catholics of this province have protested against the usurpation of the estates belonging, in this province, to the order of the Jesuits at the time of its suppression during the last century. At the same time they revindicated the possession and ownership thereof as estates destined for purposes within the exclusive domain of the Catholic Church, according to the express and sacred will of the numerous benefactors, all Catholics, of the order as established in Canada. Having learned that the ground on which the Jesuits College at Quebec was built is about to be shortly put up to sale by the Government of this province, we, the archbishop and bishops of the province of Quebec, believe that it is our duty to renew, and we do hereby renew the aforesaid protests and revindications of the said estates, and in particular of the ground in question."

Later, the Abbé Brichet, one of the most distinguished members of the clergy in Rome who have had to do with the affair, wrote to the General of the Jesuits :—

" His Grace the Archbishop (of Quebec) hopes to obtain them (the estates) easily for his university."

On the 11th October, 1884, the Archbishop of Tyre, Secretary of the Propaganda, sent a letter to the General of the Jesuits, in which he said :—

" The undersigned, Secretary of the Holy Congregation of the Propaganda, deems it his duty to communicate to you the final decision of the Holy Father on the head of the estates which your worthy company formerly possessed in Canada, and which the government now wishes to restore to the church."

On the 8th April, 1885, Mgr. Taschereau again demanded the restitution of these estates from Hon. Mr. Ross, then Premier, who replied as follows —

" If His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor in Council decides to reopen and reconsider this question of the Jesuits' Estates, I shall not fail to inform Your Grace and the Rev. Jesuit Fathers, in order that, with your concurrence and theirs, he may, if need be, propose to the Legislature a mea-

"sure which shall settle this question in a satisfactory and final manner."

Thus, there can be no manner of doubt, the question was settled in principle. Only two things were needed to complete the transaction :

1. To have had the necessary courage and to defy the Orangemen.

2. To fix the figure of the indemnity.

This is exactly what our opponents did not dare to do. Secretly they said to the religious authorities : "We are ready to settle ;" but publicly, through fear of the Orangemen, they did not dare to settle.

See how this poltroonery is evident from the wording of a document already cited :

"The Jesuits will get nothing, and in vain and to the great injury of religion, will fanaticism and prejudice have been excited in a question in which the passions are so easily aroused."

And note how the same cowardly and underhand policy of our opponents showed itself at Rome :

"The Protestant portion of the members—says a document in Rome—are too hostile to the Jesuits to consent to this restitution. This point is clear to all, who know the men and state of things. Directly, the Company has no chance of getting back possession of these estates. Nevertheless, Monsignor understands that it is right that the Company should have a good share in their acquisition. He will undertake quite secretly to pay to the Company the sum of 500,000 francs."

There cannot be any reasonable doubt on this point : the settlement was decided in principle, and, if they had not been afraid of the Orangemen, that settlement would have taken place.

The Jesuits were in appearance, to get nothing, for fear of annoying the Protestants, but there was quite a disposition to give them 500,000 francs secretly.

It was doubtless to carry out the same idea and to avoid always giving offence to the Protestants that Mr. Chapleau, who, nevertheless had been mixed up with the whole affair, said at St. Hilaire : (*Montreal Gazette* of 7th September last) :

"Yes, I had not only began, but had almost completed the settlement of this vexed question when I left office, but not in a manner to irritate the sensibilities of those who differ from us. The fact is the estates did not belong to

the Jesuits and it was a misnomer to call them the Jesuits' Estates. His Eminence Cardinal Simeoni, Prefect of the Propaganda, said there was nothing which belonged to the Jesuits, but there was something which might belong to the Church. When the Jesuit Order was abolished by the Pope, their property was religious property that belonged to the Church generally, and under ecclesiastical law when a property belongs to the Church, the diocesan bishops dispose of it for the public good and, in this way, all the public would benefit by it. The Church pretended to have rights in the property. What did we wish to do with it? We desired to dispose of it in grants in favor of superior education. . . . ”

Therefore, I have a right to conclude that we, Catholics, are all agreed on the question of the principle of the settlement, and that the only difficulty is to know whether it is opportune to apply this principle openly, honestly and frankly.

Our opponents, according to their usual policy, wished to take the crooked, secret and hypocritical way, in order not to ruffle the sensibilities of their Orange allies.

We preferred to follow the open, honest and frank way, and we decided to do justice, and to restore stolen property without hope of favor from the religious authorities, but also without fear of the fanaticism of the Orangemen.

2. We have paid too much.

This reproach is simply stupid. Mr. Chapleau, who allows it to be made and, perhaps, even inspires it, knows well how the matter stands. He had fixed the figure himself. I affirm this knowingly and am prepared to prove the fact. He had fixed at \$500,000 the share of the Catholics in these estates. We only pay \$400,000. Moreover, all reasonable people know that this last figure is not excessive.

It is the one which appears to have been formerly fixed here, under Mr. Ouimet's Government, for the Abbé Brichet said in the document already cited :

“ The Government of Canada retains the estates formerly belonging to the old Company. They may be valued at “ two millions of francs.....” Now, two millions of francs make \$400,000.

This figure seems all the more reasonable, that Father Turgeon, representing the Holy Father and the Jesuits, claimed \$900,000 for a single property, in his letter of the 20th May, 1888, and the whole of the estates in question are valued by Mr. Rivard, the Superintendent of the Jesuits Estates, in a report which he made to me on the 1st May, 1888, at \$1,602,-203.

On his part, Mr. Varin, another agent of those estates, in a report of the 22nd May, 1860, mentioned in an Order-in-

Council, of the 1st October, 1860, estimates their value at £277,817.

As regards the annual revenues from these estates, without counting casuals from the sale of timber, of unconceded lands, &c., &c. Mr. Rivard, in a report of 1873, (Report of Crown Lands Commissioner for 1873), places them at \$20,-617.33, which, at 4 per cent interest, represented, at that time, a larger capital than we have paid.

On the 4th June, 1888, I wrote to Father Turgeon :—

" Seeing the difficulties surrounding the settlement of " this question and the situation of the Province, we are " obliged with regret to say that we cannot offer you more " than \$400,000.

" To arrive at this figure we do not take as a basis the " intrinsic value of property, as the religious authorities long " ago abandoned the claim for a restitution in kind, and in- " variably limited their claim to a compensation.

" The amount of this compensation was even indicated " by the religious authorities of this country, at Rome, which " authorities on several occasions declared themselves willing " to accept \$400,000.00.

" It is therefore impossible for us to exceed that sum....."

Therefore, under these circumstances, with all these facts and according to all these documents, I am warranted in asserting that the amount paid is not excessive, that it is reasonable and that, consequently, the charge made against us of having paid too much is unfounded and should be rejected.

3. *We did wrong in mixing up the name of the Pope with this transaction.*

This charge is a very strange one; still, there is nothing to surprise us in it, since it emanates from the Orangemen and Mr. Chapleau. A queer association, is it not? It is nevertheless a very natural one, and quite in harmony with the traditions of the Bleus.

Firstly, could we have settled this affair without the intervention of the Pope and without mixing his name up with the whole of this transaction?

For a Catholic, the question is an easy one to answer, for it is an elementary principle, in ecclesiastical law, that the property of abolished religious orders belongs to the Universal Church, and that the Pope may dispose of them. This is, moreover, unmistakeably stated in the pontifical documents relating to this question of the Jesuits' Estates, and the present

Pope would never have consented to the settlement of the question unless he remained absolute master of the distribution of the amount of the compensation.

Moreover, Mr. Chapleau himself stated so at St. Hilaire in the words I have quoted just now. Let us hear him :

"The fact is, the estates did not belong to the Jesuits..... His Eminence Cardinal Simeoni, prefect of the propaganda, said there was nothing that belonged to the Jesuits, but there was something which might belong to the Church. When the Jesuit order was abolished by the Pope, their property was religious property that belonged to the Church, and under ecclesiastical law, when a property belongs to the Church, the diocesan bishops dispose of it for the public good, and in this way all the public would benefit by it. The Church pretended to have rights to this property....."

Mr. Chapleau admits, therefore, that this property belonged to the Church, but he pretends that the bishops should have disposed of it. This is a grave error. The bishops could dispose of it only with the Pope's permission and in the manner indicated by him.

From the moment these principles are admitted, the accusation falls of itself. In fact, since these estates became the property of the Universal Church and the Pope alone could dispose of it, he alone could distribute the money granted as compensation therefor. Consequently, why should we be reproached for bringing the Pope into the matter? We could not settle without him; we could not distribute the money without him; therefore we had to go to the Pope, and I did go to him, with the result which is known to all, that is, with success.

Moreover, if it be a crime for me to have gone to Rome to settle this question, it is also a crime for Mr. Chapleau to have gone there. He has said himself that he went to Rome to settle this matter; it was therefore because he knew he could not settle without the intervention of Rome. Now, what is Rome? For us, and from a religious point of view, it is the Pope. Unless Mr. Chapleau hoped to have settled this matter with King Humbert, for there are two sovereigns in Rome, one a lawful one whom we acknowledge, the Pope; the other an unlawful one whom we do not acknowledg, King Kumbert. To which of these two was Mr. Chapleau to apply? As for myself, there can be no doubt, I applied to the Pope, since that is the crime I am accused of.

But I do not wish to fatigue you any more with this question, which I will settle in a few words.

Mr. Chapleau's accusation pained me to such an extent that I deemed it my duty to write the following letter to His Eminence Cardinal Taschereau:—

PREMIER'S OFFICE,

PROVINCE OF QUEBEC,

Quebec, 25th October, 1889.

YOUR EMINENCE;

I respectfully ask permission to put the following questions to Your Eminence, and to ask you to answer them officially:—

1. Was it possible, in Your Eminence's opinion, to settle the question of the Jesuits' Estates without having the distribution of the amount granted as compensation to the exclusive and entire discretion of the Sovereign Pontiff?

2. Is there, to your knowledge, any document or anything which might lead one to believe that the Sovereign Pontiff would have consented to the settlement taking place without his having absolute control of such distribution?

With the assurance of my most profound respect, I remain, Your Eminence,

Your most obedient servant,

(Signed) HONORÉ MERCIER.

To His Eminence Cardinal Taschereau, Quebec.

The following is His Eminence's reply.

ARCHBISHOP'S PALACE, QUEBEC,

28th October, 1889.

HON. H. MERCIER,

Premier of the Province of Quebec.

SIR,

In your letter of the 25th instant you ask me to reply officially to the two following questions:

1. Was it possible in Your Eminence's opinion to settle the question of the Jesuits' Estates without leaving the distribution of the amount granted as compensation to the exclusive and entire discretion of the Sovereign Pontiff?

2. Is there, to your knowledge, any document or anything which might lead one to believe that the Sovereign Pontiff would have consented to the settlement taking place without his having absolute control of such distribution?

To the first I answer:

No; unless the Pope had consented thereto.

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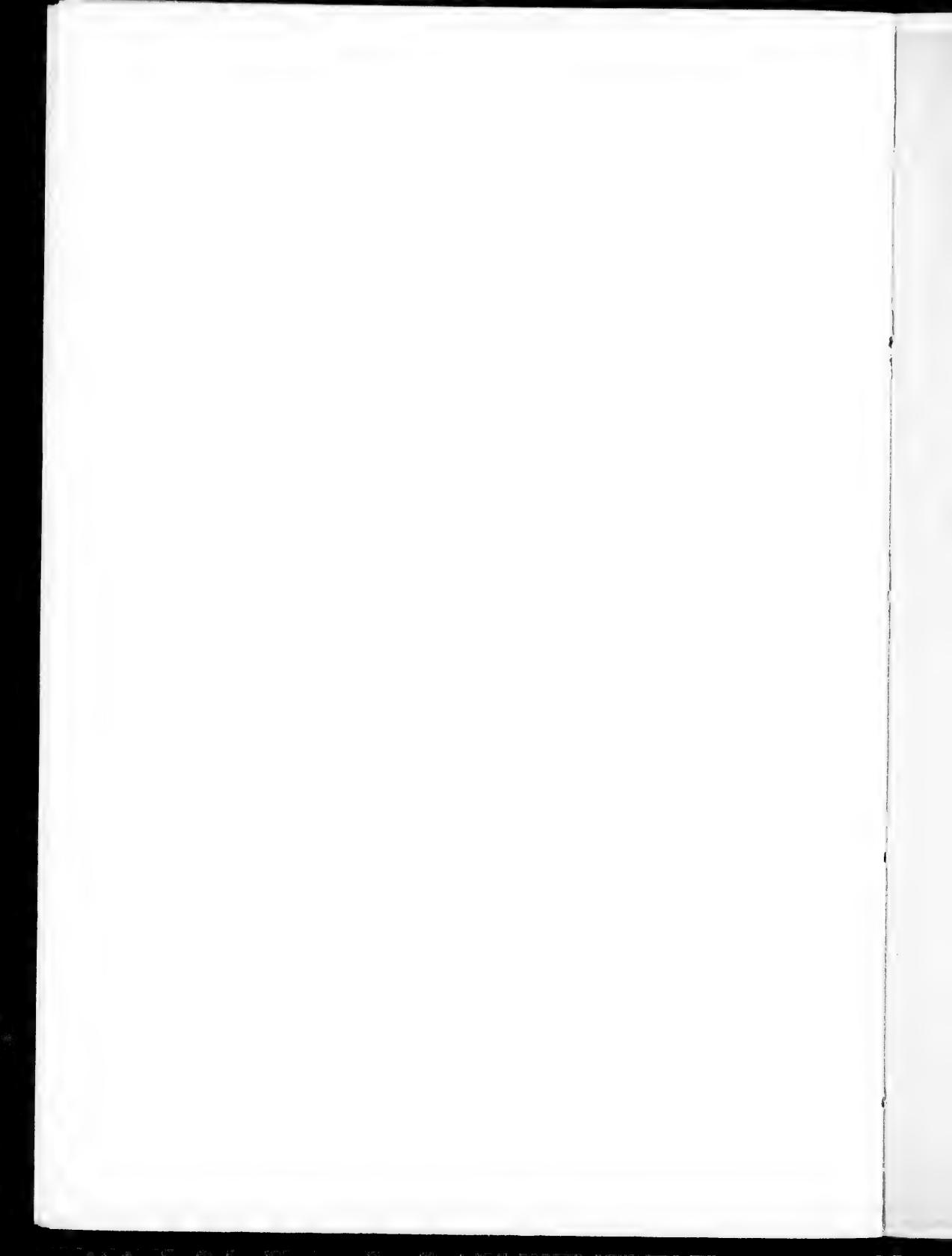
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To the second question :

No ; to my knowledge there is no document or anything which might have led me to believe that the Sovereign Pontiff would have consented to the settlement taking place without his having absolute control of such distribution.

And even if there had been any before 1888, the letter of His Eminence Cardinal Simeoni of the 27th March, 1888, (see Statutes of 1888,) is quite clear and formal on the subject.

I remain, Mr. Premier, &c.,

(Signed) E. A. CARDINAL TASCHEREAU,
Archbishop of Quebec.

This point is therefore settled to the confusion of our enemies, to the confusion of Mr. Chapleau.

He claims that he could have settled the question with the Archbishop ; that is to say, that the distribution of the amount granted would not have been made by the Pope.

The Archbishop is His Eminence, Cardinal Taschereau.

Now, the letter which I have just read formally contradicts this assertion, and shows that that question could not be settled without passing through the Pope, that is to say, without the Pope distributing the amount.

Why discuss any further ? All I might add would be useless ; my thesis is proved and that of Mr. Chapleau is disproved.

As to the Orangemen who support him, I have nothing to do with them. They are our natural enemies, the enemies of the French Canadians, the enemies of the Catholics and, above all, the enemies of the Pope.

They had to condemn me with reference to this transaction, not only as regards the form, not only as to the fact of bringing the Pope's name into the transaction, of leaving the distribution to him, but also and, above all, as regards the merits and the settlement itself.

By condemning me the Orangemen are consistent, they are faithful to their traditions, and I would have been grieved, I might say insulted, if they had not honored me with their condemnation in this connection.

THE PROTESTANT MINORITY.

Some evil disposed persons have wished to take advantage of the settlement of the Jesuits' Estates to raise prejudices against the majority in this Province, by accusing them of

being unjust towards the Protestant minority, and have pretended, quite falsely, that the said minority were illtreated and had not the full exercise of their rights.

The rights of a minority may be considered from four points of view :—

1. The religious point of view ;
2. The civil point of view ;
3. The educational point of view ;
4. The political point of view.

Assuredly it cannot be contended that the Protestant minority do not exercise and do not successfully claim their rights in this Province from a religious, political and civil point of view.

No one can say that the Catholics prevent the Protestants from practising their religion as freely as they do themselves. There are Protestant churches everywhere, even in the centres which are, I might say, exclusively Catholic; and we have yet to learn of the slightest insult being offered to Protestant congregations when they wish to meet.

As to political and civil rights they are consigned in our codes and our constitution, and it has never occurred to anyone to say that the Protestants had any reason to complain in this respect.

As to educational rights, it is but just to state the case exactly as it stands so as to remove any doubts which may exist in this connection.

But before doing so, let us state that the law declares both languages, French and English, official, that practically all our public documents are printed in both languages, that both are spoken in the Legislature and very often we, the French-Canadian members, reply in English to speeches made in English by our colleagues of another origin and we endeavour, in every respect, to render them every possible service, so as to remove any pretext of complaint.

The same is done in our courts of justice, where, frequently, French-Canadian advocates plead in English, through courtesy for their colleagues of a different origin and although we are not obliged to do so, whenever, in our departments, we have to write to an English-speaking person, we do so in his own language. This is an invariable rule, and I not think there are any exceptions, or if there are, they are so few that it would not be reasonable to take them into account.

As to the question of education, I do not think there is a minority better treated than that of the Province of Quebec in this respect, and as I do not wish my own evidence to be accepted, I have taken care to obtain that of Rev. Mr. Rexford, the Protestant Secretary of the Council of Public Instruction.

The following is the letter he has written me in answer to mine. This reply is complete and will settle in a definite manner the question I am now speaking of :

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION.

1077-89.

Quebec, 9th July, 1889.

The Honorable the Premier of the Province of Quebec.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 27th June ultimo, containing questions concerning the Protestant Schools of the Province of Quebec, and I beg leave to submit the following statements in reply thereto :

Question 1. What is the status of the Protestant and separate schools of the Province of Quebec?

Answer. The Protestant schools of the Province of Quebec are either schools of the majority of the municipality in which they are situated, under the control of five School Commissioners, or they are the dissentient schools of the minority in the municipality under three School Trustees. Of such schools there are in the Province 916 elementary schools, 28 model schools, and 19 academies, making a total of nearly one thousand schools, with an attendance of 34,440 pupils. These schools suffer in many instances from the thinly settled dissentient sections upon which they depend for support, but they enjoy all the rights and privileges of the schools of the majority in the Province in reference to school regulations, text-books, courses of study and qualifications of teachers, and in this last respect they are perhaps somewhat in advance of some of the schools of the majority of the Province. In fact the Protestant Committee having a smaller number of schools under its control has been able to introduce from time to time measures for the improvement of the Protestant Schools before they have been provided for the Roman Catholic Schools of the Province.

Question 2. Please give me a synopsis of the law on this matter and the rights of the Protestants to obtain separate schools in this Province?

Answer. The Province is divided for school purposes into sections called school municipalities.

The schools of these municipalities are under the directions of five Commissioners elected by the ratepayers. If the inhabitants of the municipality are chiefly Protestant the schools of the municipality are conducted in accordance with the regulations of the Protestant Committee in reference to course of study, text-books, teachers, etc. If the Protestants are in the minority in a municipality and are not satisfied with the management of the schools they have the right to dissent and notify the School Commissioners that they, or any number of them, dissent. They then elect three trustees for the management of their dissentient schools. Such dissentient schools have all the rights and privileges of the schools of the majority in the municipality with one exception, namely, the dissentient trustees cannot levy school taxes upon incorporated companies. This power rests with the School Commissioners of each municipality, who are held to pay over to the trustees a share of the taxes upon

incorporated companies proportionate to the number of pupils attending their respective schools. In other respects the Dissentient Schools' Trustees have the same powers as School Commissioners in reference to the schools under their control. If the dissentients of one municipality are too weak to support a school they may unite with an adjoining municipality of their own faith in supporting schools. Any head of a family, living in a municipality having no dissentient school, may [1] if he belongs to the minority, [2] and have children of school age, and [3] if he lives within three miles of a school of his own faith in another municipality, pay his taxes in support of that school and send his children to it. The person belonging to the religious minority may at any time become a dissentient by giving the prescribed notices, but he is liable to the ordinary taxes imposed by the School Commissioners for the then current year, and for his *pro rata* share of the existing debts of the school corporation. In the case of the formation of a new municipality, however, if the notice of dissent is served within a month after the organization of the municipality, the dissentients are not subject to any taxes imposed by the School Commissioners.

When the minority in a municipality dissents they are entitled to receive a share of the school property of the school corporation from which they dissent; this share is determined *pro rata* according to the amount of taxable property represented by the dissentents, the Protestant schools whether dissentient or under School Commissioners, are under the supervision of the Protestant Committee of the Council of Public Instruction, which is composed at present of ten members appointed by the Government, five members appointed by the Committee itself and one member elected by the Provincial Association of Protestant Teachers of the Province. This committee is empowered to make regulations for Protestant schools, concerning normal schools, boards of examiners' schools inspectors, text books, and also concerning the organization government and discipline of Protestant schools and the classification of schools and teachers. The McGill Normal school trains, under the regulations of this committee, teachers for the non-Roman Catholic section of the Province.

The Protestant Central Board of Examiners, acting under the regulation of the Committee, has, alone, the power to grant diplomas valid for teaching in Protestant Schools.

Five regular inspectors and three partial inspectors, appointed upon the recommendation of the Protestant Committee, inspect the Protestant schools of the Province.

Question 3.—Please give the number of protestant and separate schools in this Province with the amount of money given to them by the Government?

Answer 1.—There are about one thousand protestant schools in the Province. 2. The Government grant for elementary education is \$160,000. This sum is distributed among the school municipalities of the Province in proportion to their total population according to the last census. In each municipality, where there are dissentient schools under trustees, the share of the grant to the municipality, according to population, is divided between the school commissioners and the dissentient trustees, in proportion to the number of children attending their respective schools. As this grant is divided first according to total population and subsequently, where dissentient schools exist, according to the variable school attendance, it is impossible to state the exact amount of the grant received by Protestant schools. It is evident, however, that these schools receive, approximately, according to population, or about one seventh of the total grant of \$160,000.

Question 4.—Could you give me the names of the Universities, Colleges, Model Schools, that receive grants from the Government and the amount given to each of them.

Answer.—The following is a list of the Protestant institutions of superior education together with the grant made to them for the year ending 30th June 1888, from the superior education funds:

L.—THE UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES.

1. From the Marriage License Fees :

| | |
|----------------------------------------|-------------|
| McGill University | \$2,500 |
| Morrin College..... | 1,250 |
| University of Bishop's
College..... | 1,250 |
| | —— \$ 5,000 |

2. From Superior Education Fund :

| | |
|----------------------------------------|-------------|
| McGill University..... | \$1,650 |
| Morrin College..... | 500 |
| St. Francois College..... | 1,000 |
| University of Bishop's
College..... | 1,000 |
| | —— \$ 4,150 |

II.—HIGH SCHOOLS.

| | |
|--------------------------|-------------|
| High School, Quebec..... | \$1,285 |
| High School, Montreal.. | 1,185 |
| | —— \$ 2,740 |

III.—ACADEMIES.

| | |
|--------------------------------------|--------|
| Coaticook | \$ 575 |
| Huntingdon | 575 |
| Waterloo..... | 575 |
| Lachute..... | 425 |
| Sherbrooke..... | 375 |
| Inverness | 300 |
| Cote St. Antoine..... | 300 |
| Dunham | 250 |
| Shawville..... | 250 |
| Granby..... | 250 |
| St. Johns..... | 200 |
| Clarenceville.. | 200 |
| Three Rivers..... | 225 |
| Cowansville | 150 |
| Bedford..... | 150 |
| Lacolle | 150 |
| Knowlton..... | 100 |
| Quebec High School
(Girls) | 200 |
| Montreal High School
(Girls)..... | 200 |

| | |
|------------------------------------|-------------|
| Compton Ladies, Col-
lege | 225 |
| Stanstead W. College.... | 400 |
| | —— \$ 6,075 |

IV.—MODEL SCHOOLS.

| | |
|----------------------|-------------|
| Sutton..... | 200 |
| Aylmer..... | 150 |
| Portage du Fort..... | 150 |
| Ormstown..... | 125 |
| Danville..... | 50 |
| Clarendon..... | 125 |
| Cookshire..... | 125 |
| Mansonville..... | 125 |
| Leeds..... | 50 |
| Hemmingford..... | 125 |
| Waterville..... | 125 |
| Ulverton..... | 50 |
| Richmond..... | 75 |
| Berthier..... | 75 |
| Bolton..... | 50 |
| Bryson..... | 50 |
| Bury..... | 50 |
| Como..... | 50 |
| Freelighsburg | 50 |
| Farnham | 50 |
| Grenville | 50 |
| Gould | 50 |
| Hatley..... | 50 |
| Hull | 50 |
| Laehine | 50 |
| Magog..... | 50 |
| Marbleton | 50 |
| Mystic | 50 |
| Rawdon..... | 50 |
| Sorel..... | 50 |
| St. Sylvestre..... | 50 |
| Stanbridge..... | 50 |
| Valleyfield | 50 |
| Warden..... | 50 |
| Paspébiac | 100 |
| Gaspe Basin..... | 100 |
| New Richmond | 100 |
| | —— \$ 2,850 |
| | \$20,545 |

The amount of the foregoing grants (\$20,545) is provided for as follows:—

| | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| The Protestant share of the superior education grant, according to population | \$ 9,700 |
| Special grant to High School | 2,470 |
| Interest on marriage license fund..... | 1,400 |

| | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| Sums arising from the celebration of marriages by Protestant Ministers..... | 7,410 |
| Balance from last year's grants..... | 565 |
|
 | |
| Total..... | \$21,545 |
| Deduct fixed charges..... | 1,000 |
|
 | |
| Total amount available for distribution..... | \$20,545 |

Question 5.—Could you give me the number of the English speaking Protestant population in this Province?

Answer.—I have no means of ascertaining the number of the English speaking Protestant population of the Province as distinct from the Protestant population speaking other languages. According to the last census there were in the Province :—

| | |
|----------------------|-----------|
| Roman Catholics..... | 1,170,713 |
| Protestants..... | 183,990 |
| Neutral..... | 4,319 |
|
 | |
| Total..... | 1,359,027 |

I have the honor to be,

Dear Sir,

Your obedient servant,
(Signed), ELSON I. REXFORD,

*Secretary of the Department of
Public Instruction.*

True Copy.

(Signed) ELSON I. REXFORD,
Secretary.

This is how the Protestant minority are treated in this Province.

I do not speak of electoral districts where the majority are French and Catholic and return Protestant members ; I do not speak of the large numbers of English Protestants whom we have appointed to the Legislative Council to represent electoral districts in which there are hardly any English Protestants ; I do not speak of the great number of English Protestants who receive splendid salaries and are treated by us as if they were French-Canadians and Catholics. No, I do not speak of all this, for it is not right to boast of being just. It is only a matter of regret that our enemies should accuse us of injustice when we are not in any way deserving of the accusation.

Let it be known, once for all, that the Protestant minority in this Province are well, generously and liberally treated, and that there is no country in the world where the majority have less religious and national prejudices than in the Province of Quebec.

The letter of Rev. Mr. Rexford shows the situation ; let us hope it will have a salutary effect in other provinces, where they seem disposed to forget the laws of justice by threatening the minority with the loss of the rights which they enjoy here.

Only—I wish to be permitted to say that a minority have no rights on account of their nationality and religion ; they have rights because they are a minority ; the Protestants have as many rights as the Catholics ; the English, Irish and Scotch as the French-Canadians, but the French have as many as the English, Irish and Scotch ; and what is allowed the one, in Canada, must be allowed the others ; what is refused to the one must be refused to the others.

Let us hope that these principles will never be denied, and that we will not be called upon in any of our provinces to have recourse to reprisals and to remind the majority who wish to be unjust that there is a minority who require protection.

CONCLUSION.

Gentlemen, this is what I had to say to you. I think I have answered in a satisfactory manner the charges brought against the Government. I will stop there, although I would have much more to tell you.

In conclusion, allow me to ask you not to forget that we have formed the national party, with your consent, with your support, with the consent and support of all the Liberals in the Province of Quebec ; that this party is the result of an honorable alliance, and has enabled me to form the present Government, which, at its inception, was called national, has since remained national, and will remain national as long as I am at its head.

This means that we have broken away from the old party bonds, that we have renounced certain traditions considered as dangerous and certain ideas condemned by respected authorities, in order to assert a new programme sufficiently liberal to secure the public prosperity, but also sufficiently conservative not to disquiet good citizens.

This programme will be respected, this Government will be maintained, and this party will live under these conditions and no others.

I rely upon all honest men to assist me in keeping this promise and in having this decision respected.